

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Methods and devices are provided for encoding/decoding structured documents, particularly XML documents, wherein a bit stream or part of a bit stream is produced from a schema as a function of a metaschema with the aid of an encoding method. According to the present invention, at least one of the following optimization processes is carried out: separation of anonymous types from element declarations and attribute declarations and encoding as own type, the type definition thereof being instantiated in the schema definition as a top level element; normalization of the syntax trees on the encoder side; replacement of the character strings of type names; and transmission of information for the inheritance tree. The decoding takes such optimization processes into account and conversely produces a schema from the bit stream.